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FINANCE

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510 - 3505

January 10, 2018

The Honorable James N. Mattis
Secretary
Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Mattis,

As you develop the Department's Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 budget request, I urge you to include certain military construction (MILCON) priorities for critical active duty and reserve component missions in Ohio. As the Department works to maintain retention and recruitment levels and to continue to improve mission readiness, it is critical that we provide our active duty, reserve and National Guard units the resources, equipment, and facilities they need to be safe and successful.

Included in the Department's FY2018 Future Years Defense Plan were projects that would improve training and readiness, and enhance opportunities for Ohio Guard and reserve units. We maintain and improve defense and national security capabilities by investing in our military facilities. Further, we communicate to our servicemembers that their training needs matter and that we are willing to provide support in return for their sacrifice of time and effort.

A small arms range at Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base and an Automated Multipurpose Machine Gun Range at Camp Ravenna allow units to train the most basic skills of the warfighter. Affording servicemembers the opportunity to train in safe, up-to-date facilities should not wait. I urge you to include \$8 million and \$6.4 million respectively in the FY2019 budget request for their construction.

As always, when we make decisions regarding our defense facilities we should focus on the safety of our servicemembers and the communities in which they train. That is why it is critical to fund a new fire station at Mansfield Lahm Air National Guard Base. Firefighters train constantly for risky missions in dangerous conditions. They need an up to date space to ensure that they are able to respond as efficiently and effectively as possible when they need to. I encourage the inclusion of \$12 million for the construction of this new facility in the Department's FY2019 budget request.

Emergency response is at the core of the National Guard. As part of the RED HORSE mission, our Airmen at the Port Clinton Air National Guard Base stand ready to meet challenges our communities face, providing support when many are experiencing the worst day of their life. You know that mission success can often depend on effective logistics and planning. A new logistics complex at the base would increase mission capability and readiness, which could mean

the difference between life and death. I urge you to include \$7.5 million in the Department's FY2019 budget request for construction of this critical asset.

Finally, improvements to facilitate readiness and critical missions at reserve component and active duty installations is necessary. I encourage you to maintain proposed FYDP requests of \$8.4 million for a new Reserve Training Building and \$15 million for a new National Guard Readiness Center in Columbus, Ohio. I also urge you to invest in improvements to the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center and the National Air and Space Intelligence Center. These facilities at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and the men and women who work there are critical to our security and national defense. These investments will help our warfighters retain and build critical skills for the challenges we face across the globe.

I look forward to working with you and the Department to ensure that our active duty and reserve component units remain ready and able to do what is asked of them. I thank you for your consideration of these important projects as you lead the effort to set national defense and security priorities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sherrod Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sherrod" and last name "Brown" clearly distinguishable.

Sherrod Brown

United States Senator